# The MAN in LOWER TEN

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### SYNOPSIS.

Lawrence Blakeley, lawyer, goes to Pittsburg with the forged notes in the Bronson case to take the deposition of the chief witness for the prosecution, John Gilmore, a millionaire. In the latter's house the lawyer is attracted by the picture of a girl whom Gilmore explains is his granddaughter, Alison West. He says her father is a rascal and a friend of the forger. Standing in line to buy a Pullman ticket Blakeley is requested by a lady to buy her one. He gives her lower eleven and retains lower ten. He finds a man in a drunken stupor in lower ten and retires in lower nine. He awakens in lower seven and finds his bag and clothing missing. The man in lower ten is found murdered. It is learned that the dead man is Simon Harrington of Pittsburg. The man who disappeared with Blakeley's clothes is suspected of the murder.

### CHAPTER VI—Continued.

"Then you haven't heard the rest of the tragedy?" I asked, holding out the case. "It's frightfully bad luck for me, but it makes a good story. You see—"

At that moment the conductor and porter ceased their colloquy. The conductor came directly toward me, tugging as he came at his bristling gray mustache.

"I would like to talk to you in the car," he said to me, with a curious glance at the young lady.

"Can't it wait?" I objected. "We are on our way to a cup of coffee and a slice of bacon. Be merciful as you are powerful."

"I'm afraid the breakfast will have to wait," he replied. "I won't keep you long." There was a note of authority in his voice which I resented; but, after all, the circumstances were unusual.

"We'll have to defer that cup of coffee for a while," I said to the girl; "but don't despair; there's breakfast somewhere."

As we entered the car, she stood aside, but I felt rather than saw that she followed us. I was surprised to see a half dozen men gathered around the berth in which I had wakened, number seven. It had not yet been made up.

As we passed along the aisle, I was conscious of a new expression on the faces of the passengers. The tall woman who had fainted was searching my face with narrowed eyes, while the stout woman of the kindly heart avoided my gaze, and pretended to look out of the window.

As we pushed our way through the group I fancied that it closed around me ominously. The conductor said nothing, but led the way without ceremony to the side of the berth.

"What's the matter?" I inquired. I was puzzled, but not apprehensive. "Have you some of my things? I'd be thankful even for my shoes; these are confoundedly tight."

Nobody spoke, and I fell silent, too. For one of the pillows had been turned over, and the under side of the white case was streaked with brownish stains. I think it was a perceptible time before I realized that the stains were blood, and that the faces around were filled with suspicion and distrust.

"Why, it—that looks like blood," I said vacuously. There was an incessant pounding in my ears, and the conductor's voice came from far off.

"It is blood," he asserted grimly.

I looked around with a dizzy attempt at nonchalance. "Even if it is," I remonstrated, "surely you don't suppose for a moment that I know anything about it!"

The amateur detective elbowed his way in. He had a scrap of transparent paper in his hand, and a pencil.

"I would like permission to trace the stains," he began eagerly. "Also" —to me—"if you will kindly jab your finger with a pin—needle—anything—"

"If you don't keep out of this," the conductor said savagely, "I will do some jabbing myself. As for you, sir—" he turned to me. I was absolutely innocent, but I knew that I presented a typical picture of guilt; I was covered with cold sweat, and the pounding in my ears kept up dizzily. "As for you, sir—"

The irrepressible amateur detective made a quick pounce at the pillow and pushed back the cover. Before our incredulous eyes he drew out a narrow steel dirk which had been buried to the small cross that served as a head.

There was a chorus of voices around, a quick surging forward of the crowd. So that was what had scratched my hand! I buried the wound in my coat pocket.

"Well," I said, trying to speak naturally, "doesn't that prove what I have been telling you? The man who committed the murder belonged to this berth, and made an exchange in some way after the crime. How do you know he didn't change the tags so I would come back to this berth?" This was an inspiration; I was pleased with it. "That's what he did, he changed the tags," I reiterated.

There was a murmur of assent around. The doctor, who was standing beside me, put his hand on my arm. "If this gentleman committed this crime, and I for one feel sure he did not, then who is the fellow who got away? And why did he go?"

"We have only one man's word for that," the conductor snarled. "I've traveled some in these cars myself, and no one ever changed berths with me."

Somebody on the edge of the group asserted that hereafter he would travel by daylight. I glanced up and caught the eye of the girl in blue.

"They are all mad," she said. Her tone was low, but I heard her distinctly. "Don't take them seriously enough to defend yourself."

"I am glad you think I didn't do it," I observed meekly, over the crowd. "Nothing else is of any importance."

The conductor had pulled out his note-book again. "Your name, please," he said gruffly.

"Lawrence Blakeley, Washington."

"Your occupation?"

"Attorney. A member of the firm of Blakeley & McKnight."

"Mr. Blakeley, you say you have occupied the wrong berth and have been robbed. Do you know anything of the man who did it?"

"Only from what he left behind," I answered. "These clothes—"

"They fit you," he said with quick suspicion. "Isn't that rather a coincidence? You are a large man."

"Good heavens," I retorted, stung to fury, "do I look like a man who would wear this kind of a necktie? Do you suppose I carry purple and green barred silk handkerchiefs? Would any man in his senses wear a pair of shoes a full size too small?"

The conductor was inclined to hedge. "You will have to grant that I am in a peculiar position," he said. "I have only your word as to the exchange of berths, and you understand I am merely doing my duty. Are there any clews in the pockets?"

For the second time I emptied them of their contents, which he noted. "Is that all?" he finished. "There was nothing else?"

"Nothing."

"That's not all, sir," broke in the porter, stepping forward. "There was a small black satchel."

"That's so," I exclaimed. "I forgot the bag. I don't even know where it is."

The easily swayed crowd looked suspicious again. I've grown so accustomed to reading the faces of a jury, seeing them swing from doubt to belief, and back again to doubt, that I instinctively watch expressions. I saw that my forgetfulness had done me harm—that suspicion was roused again.

The bag was found a couple of seats away, under somebody's raincoat—another dubious circumstance. Was I hiding it? It was brought to the berth and placed beside the conductor, who opened it at once.

It contained the usual traveling impedimenta—change of linen, collars, handkerchiefs, a bronze-green scarf, and a safety razor. But the attention of the crowd riveted itself on a flat, Russia leather wallet, around which a heavy gum band was wrapped, and which bore in gilt letters the name "Simon Harrington."

### CHAPTER VII.

#### A Fine Gold Chain.

The conductor held it out to me, his face sternly accusing.

"Is this another coincidence?" he asked. "Did the man who left you his clothes and the barred silk handkerchief and the tight shoes leave you the spoil of the murder?"

The men standing around had drawn off a little, and I saw the absolute futility of any remonstrance. Have you ever seen a fly, who, in these hygienic days, finding no cobwebs to entangle him, is caught in a sheet of fly paper, finds himself more and more mired, and is finally quiet with the sticky stillness of despair?

Well, I was the fly. I had seen too much of circumstantial evidence to have any belief that the establishing of my identity would weigh much against the other incriminating details. It meant imprisonment and trial, probably, with all the notoriety and loss of practice they would entail. A man thinks quickly at a time like that. All the probable consequences of the finding of that pocket-book flashed through my mind as I extended my hand to take it. Then I drew my arm back.

"I don't want it," I said. "Look inside. Maybe the other man took the money and left the wallet."

The conductor opened it, and again there was a curious surging forward of the crowd. To my intense disappointment the money was still there.

I stood blankly miserable while it was counted out—five $100 bills, six twenties and some fives and ones that brought the total to $650.

The little man with the note-book insisted on taking the numbers of the notes, to the conductor's annoyance. It was immaterial to me: Small things had lost their power to irritate. I was seeing myself in the prisoner's box, going through all the nerve-racking routine of a trial for murder—the challenging of the jury, the endless cross-examinations, the alternate hope and fear. I believe I said before that I had no nerves, but for a few minutes that morning I was as near as a man ever comes to hysteria.

I folded my arms and gave myself a mental shake. I seemed to be the center of a hundred eyes, expressing every shade of doubt and distrust, but I tried not to flinch. Then some one created a diversion.

The amateur detective was busy again with the sealskin bag, investigating the make of the safety razor and the manufacturer's name on the bronze-green tie. Now, however, he paused and frowned, as though some pet theory had been upset.

Then from a corner of the bag he drew out and held up for our inspection some three inches of fine gold chain, one end of which was blackened and stained with blood!

The conductor held out his hand for it, but the little man was not ready to give it up. He turned to me.

"You say no watch was left you? Was there a piece of chain like that?"

"No chain at all," I said sulkily. "No jewelry of any kind, except plain gold buttons in the shirt I am wearing."

"Where are your glasses?" he threw at me suddenly; instinctively my hand went to my eyes. My glasses had been gone all morning, and I had not even noticed their absence. The little man smiled cynically and held out the chain.

"I must ask you to examine this," he insisted. "Isn't it a part of the fine gold chain you wear over your ear?"

I didn't want to touch the thing: The stain at the end made me shudder. But with a baker's dozen of suspicious eyes—well, we'll say 14—there were no one-eyed men—I took the fragment in the tips of my fingers and looked at it helplessly.

"Very fine chains are much alike," I managed to say. "For all I know, this may be mine, but I don't know how it got into that sealskin bag. I never saw the bag until this morning after daylight."

"I Don't Want It," I Said.

"He admits that he had the bag," somebody said behind me. "How did you guess that he wore glasses, anyhow?" to the amateur sleuth.

That gentleman cleared his throat. "There were two reasons," he said "for suspecting it. When you see a man with the lines of his face drooping, a healthy individual with a pensive eye—suspect astigmatism. Besides, this gentleman has a pronounced line across the bridge of his nose and a mark on his ear from the chain."

After this remarkable exhibition of the theoretical as combined with the practical, he sank into a seat near by, and still holding the chain, sat with closed eyes and pursed lips. It was evident to all the car that the solution of the mystery was a question of moments. Once he bent forward eagerly and putting the chain on the window-sill, proceeded to go over it with a pocket magnifying glass, only to shake his head in disappointment. All the people around shook their heads, too, although they had not the slightest idea what it was about.

The pounding in my ears began again. The group around me seemed to be suddenly motionless in the very act of moving, as if a hypnotist had called "Rigid!" The girl in blue was looking at me, and above the din I thought she said she must speak to me—something vital. The pounding grew louder and merged into a scream. With a grinding and splintering the car rose under my feet. Then it fell away into darkness.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### The Second Section.

Have you ever been picked up out of your three-meals-a-day life, whirled around in a tornado of events, and landed in a situation so grotesque and yet so horrible that you laugh even while you are groaning, and straining at its hopelessness? McKnight says that is hysteria, and that no man worthy of the name ever admits to it.

Also, as McKnight says, it sounds like a tank drama. Just as the revolving saw is about to cut the hero into stove lengths, the second villain blows up the sawmill. The hero goes up through the roof and alights on the bank of a stream at the feet of his lady love, who is making daisy chains.

Nevertheless, when I was safely home again, with Mrs. Klopton brewing strange drinks that came in paper packets from the pharmacy, and that smelled to heaven, I remember staggering to the door and closing it, and then going back to bed and howling out the absurdity and the madness of the whole thing. And while I laughed my very soul was sick, for the girl was gone by that time, and I knew by all the loyalty that answers between men for honor that I would have to put her out of my mind.

And yet, all the night that followed, filled as it was with the shrieking demons of pain, I saw her as I had seen her last, in the queer hat with green ribbons. I told the doctor this, guardedly, the next morning, and he said it was the morphia, and that I was lucky not to have seen a row of devils with green tails.

I don't know anything about the wreck of September 9 last. You who swallowed the details with your coffee and digested the horrors with your chop, probably know a great deal more than I do. I remember very distinctly that the jumping and throbbing in my arm brought me back to a world that at first was nothing but sky, a heap of clouds that I thought hazily were the meringue on a blue charlotte russe. As the sense of hearing was slowly added to vision, I heard a woman near me sobbing that she had lost her hat pin, and she couldn't keep her hat on.

I think I dropped back into unconsciousness again, for the next thing I remember was of my blue patch of sky clouded with smoke, of a strange, roaring and crackling, of a rain of fiery sparks in my face and of somebody beating at me with feeble hands. I opened my eyes and closed them again: The girl in blue was bending over me. With that imperviousness to big things and keenness to small that is the first effect of shock, I tried to be facetious, when a spark stung my cheek.

"You will have to rouse yourself!" the girl was repeating desperately. "You've been in fire twice already." A piece of striped ticking floated slowly over my head. As the wind caught it its charring edges leaped into flame.

"Looks like a kite, doesn't it?" I remarked cheerfully. And then, as my arm gave an excruciating throb—"Jove, how my arm hurts!"

The girl bent over and spoke slowly, distinctly, as one might speak to a deaf person or a child.

"Listen, Mr. Blakeley," she said earnestly. "You must rouse yourself. There has been a terrible accident. The second section ran into us. The wreck is burning now, and if we don't move, we will catch fire. Do you hear?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### Prelude to Immortal Life.

A graceful and honorable old age is the childhood of immortality.—Pindar.

## INFECTION IN THE PRISON

### Peculiarly Favorable Field There for the Spread of the Scourge of Tuberculosis.

Only twenty-one prisons in fifteen states and territories have provided special places for the treatment of their tuberculosis prisoners. These institutions can accommodate, however, only 800 patients. In three-fourths of the major prisons and in practically all the jails of the country the tuberculous prisoner is allowed freely to infect his fellow prisoners, very few restrictions being placed upon his habits. When the congregate mode of prison life is considered, the danger of infection becomes greater than in the general population. New York and Massachusetts are the only states where any systematic attempt has been made to transfer all tuberculous prisoners to one central institution. The largest prison tuberculosis hospital is in Manila, where accommodations for 200 prisoners are provided. The next largest is Clinton prison hospital in New York, which provides for 180.

## RECKONING DAY AND HOUR

### Workman's Thoughts Not Altogether Fixed on What Might Be Called Higher Things.

Mayor William S. Jordan, at a Democratic banquet in Jacksonville, said of optimism:

"Let us cultivate optimism and hopefulness. There is nothing like it. The optimistic man can see a bright side to everything—everything.

"A missionary in a slum once laid his hand on a man's shoulder and said:

"'Friend, do you hear the solemn ticking of that clock? Tick-tack; tick, tack. And oh, my friend, do you know what day it inexorably and relentlessly brings nearer?'

"'Yes, pay day,' the other, an honest, optimistic workingman, replied."

#### Real Modesty.

"An actor should be modest, and most actors are," said James K. Hackett at a luncheon in Pittsburg. "But I know a young actor who, at the beginning of his career, carried modesty almost too far.

"This young man inserted in all the dramatic papers a want advertisement that said:

"'Engagement wanted—small part, such as dead body or outside shouts preferred.'"

#### Answering for Him.

Physician—And would you like to be a doctor, Jack?

Mother (while Jack is still hesitating)—No, no! The dear boy couldn't kill a fly.—Punch.

#### An Operatic Expletive.

"Bifferton is awfully gone on grand opera, isn't he?"

"I should say he is! Why, he even swears by Gadski!"

#### The Philosopher of Folly.

"Kind words never die," says the Philosopher of Folly, "and that is why they are so seldom carried out."

#### A BROAD HINT.

Jim—I suppose you love to go sleighing because of the melody of the jingling sleigh bells.

Jess—Yes, and they often lead up to the wedding bells. That's the best of it.

#### A Specialist.

"I don't see you on the messenger force any more, Jimmy," said the lad with the envelope in his hand.

"No; I've got a good job with a dog-fancier," replied Jimmy, as he puffed a cigarette.

"Wid a dog-fancier? What do you do—feed the dogs?"

"Naw! When a lady comes in and buys a pet dog I teach 'er 'ow to whistle."

#### Bores Barred.

A reporter asked Mr. Roosevelt at the Outlook office how he got through so much work and at the same time saw so many people. "I shun bores," was the reply. "I don't waste a minute of my time on bores. Do you perceive that I have only just one chair in this room? You see, my hunting experiences have shown me that great bores are always of small caliber."

#### Rockefeller's Hard Shot.

John D. Rockefeller tried a game of golf on the links near Augusta. On a rather difficult shot Mr. Rockefeller struck too low with his iron, and as the dust flew up he asked his caddy:

"What have I hit?"

The boy laughed and answered:

"Jaw-jah, boss."

#### Thinking of Curtain Lectures.

Mrs. Peck—I see the Maine Agricultural college proposes to establish lectures especially for country pastors.

Mr. Peck—What's the matter, ain't none of the parsons up there married?

#### Why Not.

"I see some genius has set Mendelssohn's 'Spring Song' to ragtime."

"Well?"

"I wonder how 'Il Trovatore' would go as a musical comedy?"

#### Deduction in a Street Car.

The Heavyweight—Pardon me, did I step on your foot, sir?

Coogan—If yez didn't, begorry, then the roof must hov fell on it.—Puck.

And some people never appreciate a rose until they encounter the thorn.

Grief has a much louder voice than joy.